



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Clearwater Ranger District
104 Airport Road
Grangeville, ID 83530
208-983--1950

Salmon River Ranger District
304 Slate Creek Road
White Bird, ID 83554
208-839-2211

File Code: 1950

Date: April 18, 2011

Dear Interested Party:

The Clearwater Ranger District of the Nez Perce National Forest is initiating an environmental analysis for the Doc Denny Vegetation Management Project. This environmental analysis will analyze and disclose the potential impacts from implementing the proposed project. I am requesting your comments on the proposed Doc Denny Vegetation Management Project. The Doc Denny Vegetation Management Project area is located in Idaho County, approximately 10 air miles southwest of Grangeville, Idaho within: Township 28 North, Range 4 East, Sections 4, 5, 8, 9, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, 30, 31, and 32 and T29N, Range 4 East, Section 27, 28, 33, and 34, Boise Meridian (see enclosed maps). The project is scheduled for implementation in 2014.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to move toward desired forest conditions defined by Forest Plan goals, objectives, and standards by maintaining ecosystem health and productivity. This would be accomplished through proposed management of the area's transportation system and vegetation management. The purpose of the proposed action is to help satisfy public demands for timber, to improve age-class distribution and species composition on suitable lands, and provide long-term sustained timber yield. Proposed management would meet Forest Plan direction for all resources and improve fish and big game habitat, and water quality within the analysis area. Vegetation management, accomplished through timber harvest, will help satisfy short-term demands for timber.

Landscape elements in the Lower Mill Creek Ecological Reporting Unit, such as vegetation patch size, structure, and composition are currently outside the natural range of variability historically occurring in the area. Proposed activities would help bring some of those elements closer to their natural range. The diminishing proportion of fire-climax species such as ponderosa pine is considered to be the most important element currently outside its range of variability.

Where stand-replacing fires have occurred, lodgepole pine dominates the overstory. Where stand-replacing fires have not occurred, grand fir and Douglas-fir dominate the overstory, with a few remnant ponderosa pine and western larch. Root disease is beginning to cause mortality in these mixed-conifer stands. Harvest is being proposed to regenerate mature and overmature stands and/or maintain the ponderosa pine and western larch component.

Most of the analysis area supports dense stands of mature timber. Within these stands, individual tree growth has slowed due to high stocking levels and subsequent competition, making them at risk for insect and disease infestations. Age-class distribution is skewed to the older age classes, and species composition is weighted toward those species which are more insect - and disease-susceptible. Harvesting of mature stands and regeneration with young,



healthy seral trees is being proposed in these stands. Reduced stocking levels and reduced competition will maintain stand health and vigor, improve age-class distribution and species composition, and minimize insect and disease risk. Species less susceptible to insect infestations and disease will be favored in silvicultural prescriptions.

The need for the Proposed Action is generated by the difference between current and desired conditions in the project area.

Proposed Action

The Clearwater Ranger District of the Nez Perce National Forest proposes to initiate vegetation management on approximately 1026 acres by pre-commercial thin and timber harvest in the Doc Denny analysis area. To support the harvest activities, the following activities are included: about 16 miles of road improvements, about 3.4 miles of temporary road construction/decommission, two culverts installed and/or replaced and six culvert removals. In addition, about 1.2 miles existing road would be obliterated.

The table below shows silvicultural treatment, logging systems and temporary road construction proposed by unit.

Unit Number	Silvicultural Treatment	Logging System	Est. Acres	Est. Miles of Temporary Road
1	Intermediate	Tractor/Jammer	60	0.00
1	Regeneration	Tractor/Jammer	12	0.00
2	Regeneration	Tractor/Jammer	11	0.00
3	Regeneration	Tractor/Jammer	150	1.25
4	Regeneration	Tractor	14	0.00
5	Intermediate	Tractor/Jammer	16	0.00
7	Regeneration	Tractor/Jammer	38	0.00
8	Intermediate	Tractor/Jammer	53	0.00
8	Final/Pre-Commercial Thin	Tractor/Jammer	13	0.00
8	Regeneration	Tractor/Jammer	65	0.00
8	Intermediate	Tractor/Jammer	51	0.71
8	Intermediate/ Pre-Commercial Thin	Tractor/Jammer	12	0.00
9	Regeneration	Tractor	103	0.25
10	Regeneration	Skyline	42	0.00
11	Regeneration	Tractor/Jammer	41	0.00
12	Regeneration	Skyline	15	0.16
13	Regeneration	Skyline	12	0.00
14	Regeneration	Skyline	8	0.07
15	Regeneration	Skyline	11	0.00
16	Regeneration	Tractor/Jammer	15	0.21
17	Regeneration	Tractor	11	0.00
18	Regeneration	Skyline	39	0.21
19	Regeneration	Tractor	4	0.00
21	Regeneration	Tractor	4	0.00
25	Regeneration	Tractor	48	0.13
26	Regeneration	Tractor	52	0.17
27	Regeneration	Tractor	38	0.07
27	Intermediate	Tractor	18	0.12
29	Regeneration	Tractor	23	0.00
30	Regeneration	Tractor	7	0.00
31	Pre-Commercial Thin	Hand	40	0.00
Total			1026	3.35

Your comments are important!

I invite you to participate in the analysis and further refinement of this proposed action by letting me know if you have issues or concerns with the proposed activities. Written comments can be mailed to me at the address above, or sent via facsimile to (208) 983-4099.

To assure your written comments are fully considered during the analysis of this project, please submit your comments by May 18, 2011. Comments submitted after that date will be accepted, but our ability to respond effectively could be reduced. Please note that all comments received will be included in the public record; therefore, names and addresses of participants cannot be kept confidential.

If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding this project, please feel free to contact me or David Harper at the Nez Perce National Forest office in Grangeville or call (208) 983-1950.

Thank you for your participation in the management of the Nez Perce National Forest.

Sincerely,

/s/ Thomas D. Osen
THOMAS D. OSEN
District Ranger

Enclosure (2)